

[Mrs. G. J. Nunn]

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Interview with Mrs. G. J. Nunn, 1619 Tyler, Tuesday, June 28, 1938.

January 1, 1904, Mrs. Nunn came with her husband, the late Dr. G. J. Nunn, pioneer educator of the Panhandle, to Amarillo, where they set up housekeeping at 701 Jackson, in the building which was formerly the first Methodist [??] in the town and in which the first religious services for other denominations were held. Since its use as a church building, the house had been remodeled and [converted?] into an apartment house. Mrs. Nunn still recalls with a shudder the "granite" wallpaper with which every room in the building was decorated.

In January, shortly after their arrival, Dr. Nunn established the Amarillo Academy in his home. Students from out of town roomed and boarded in the same building. In the summer of 1904 he bought a down-town building which he moved to the academy grounds and used for school purposes. Soon the purchase of another building was required by the growing student body - an old paint shop which was moved to a new location at 705 Monroe Street. This [building?] was utilized as a dormitory for boys attending the academy and was also occupied by the primary department of the school. Boys took their meals in the Nunn home at 701 Jackson, where girl students stayed. After the academy was closed, the building at 701 was sold to a Dr. [?] and converted into a rooming house which later burned.

Dr. Nunn,, who had dabbled in real estate more or less before entering the professional field, carried on this business intermit ently while he was teaching in Amarillo, finally giving up school work to devote his entire time to the real estate enterprise, [which?] was more

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profitable than the educational field. (Page any teacher and they will tell you the same).
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During the first term of the academy, Dr. Nunn and his wife did the teaching, Mrs. Nunn taking charge of the music and helping with the intermediate work, while her husband taught the [higher?] subjects. The following year W. B. Quigley, who died in May, 1935, was added to the faculty. The late Dr. David Fly also [?] taught at one time in the old academy.

The first graduating class was composed of Morris and Mary Browning, Bill Herring's sister, and others. [One?] of Mrs. Nunn's first pupils, whom she taught spelling and grammar or arithmetic, was Bascom Timmons.

Miss Laura Buchanan of the academy's [art?] department did the / covers of Holland's Magazine for several years.

As Sula Orr , Mrs. Nunn came to teach in the old Goodnight College in 1901, taking charge of the music department a year before Dr. Nunn, who was then president of Polytechnic College in Fort Worth, came to assume the presidency of the college at Goodnight.

Dr. McIlhany, to whom Dr. Nunn had gone to school and under whom Mrs. Nunn had studied as a young girl of fourteen in Stephenville, was the founder of Goodnight College and persuaded his former pupil to come to the young plains institution. In 1902 Dr. Nunn took charge of the college established by the philanthropic Colonel Goodnight and his wife, who was a school teacher before she married the colonel.

In the summer of 1903 Miss Orr and Dr. Nunn were married, coming to Amarillo in January of the following year.

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The Goodnight College at the time was still housed in the old church building. The boys' dormitory had two stories, facetiously known as the "Upper and Lower Dives".

Clarendon College was evidently older than the Goodnight institution, although the latter is often spoken of as being the oldest college [???] 3 in the Panhandle, because, as Mrs. Nunn recalls, the buildings of the former [were?] of older, substantial brick construction.

Contemporaries of the Panhandle were the Amarillo, Clarendon, Goodnight, Hereford, and Canadian [?], with perhaps a few years difference in their beginning and ending. The oldest [?] home in Canadian was formerly one of the Canadian Academy buildings. Addison or Randolph Clark was president of the Hereford College, as Mrs. Nunn recalls..

The Amarillo Academy had students, however, from [both?] Hereford and Goodnight, [therefore?] therefore the colleges at those places must have been discontinued before the opening , or established after the closing , of the Amarillo institution.

The Lowry-Phillips Academy was established in the building which is now occupied by the Children's Home after the Nunn college closed. The De [?] girls, who had gone to school to Phillips in Blue Mountain, Missouri, had a kindergarten in Amarillo, perhaps in connection with the Lowry-Phillips school, after the Nunns came to Amarillo. Mrs. Estelle Scott, [teacher?] in the Amarillo schools, was one of the De [?] sisters.

Mrs. Bertha MacGregor of 1004 Harrison also [taught?] a kindergarten about this time.

In the course of his real estate operations, Dr. Nunn, perhaps as early as 1904, acquired a part of the farm which was / later developed as Edgefield additon to Amarillo. Later, the whole of the farm was added to his holdings. Early in the development of this / property, Mr. Nunn brought a Dallas realtor to Amarillo to put the acreage on the market, several lots being sold in it at the time, many of which were paid for, others reverting to the owner, Dr. Nunn. About 1926 in the expansion days of the oil boom, the addition was formally opened, street laid 4 off, lots put up for sale, and the project promoted to a greater extent

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than in the first venture. The addition was named by the Dallas agent who promoted the first sale of [lots?] in the additon, perhaps because the land had been farm field on the edge of the town.

Mrs. Nunn remembers some of the old buildings of early Amarillo which are still doing service in the town. The H. B. Sanborn home, formerly on the block now occupied by the Municipal Auditorium, now stands at 1311 Madison, in the same condition, except for a coat of paint, green and white to replace the [favorite yellow?] original yellow. The coach house in which Sanborn kept his tally-ho still stands, converted into a dwelling. The old office [building?] in which he worked was also moved away to an uncertain location, but both coach house and [office?] are parts of other buildings in Amarillo today.

The first Amarillo public school building, the former frame courthouse which served Potter County before the first brick structure was erected, stands at the corner of Ninth and Van Buren streets, the old schoolhouse [?] to and changed until a thing of its former shape and appears once [?] but two of the tall, old fashioned schoolroom windows to [?] identify it.

Mrs. Nunn recalls an interesting incident in connection with her association with the late Colonel [?] Goodnight. Once when she was showing visitors from out of the state over the [??] Goodnight ranch in the Palo Duro Canyon, she drove a new car with great trepidation in the wake of the [irascible?] old colonel, who [?] led the way across the trackless pastures with a curt, "Turn left" or "Turn right", never looking back to see if the inexperienced driver could follow where his horse went. Down a road only wide enough to permit the careful passage of a vehicle. Mrs Nunn drove her car 5 down a declivity at the bottom of which was a sandy arroyo, where the motor immediately stalled in the quicksand, refusing to budge any farther.

The impatient old cattleman rode back to seed what was detaining her, [?] exclaiming, "Any good driver could have made it. Why didn't you give it the gun?" Wheezing from the asthma which was aggravated by his exasperation, he went over and sat down on

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a nearby hillside, from which his sterterious breathing could be painfully heard by the occupants of the car, who went in search of the [?] nearest telephone to call someone to come after the stalled automobile, which Mrs. Nunn refused to [?] attempt to extricate from [it's?] the [?] [?] sand. Later, Mrs. Nunn, who was a sincere friend of the old plainsmen, joked with Goodnight about the scare he gave her with stalled car, his asthma, which he she feared would be the death of him any minute, and his gruffness.